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or competition of districts, as he terms it, may be relied upon to bring about progress. But Mr. Robertson fails to point out that the intensity of the stimulus will vary materially with the degree of economic parallelism between the districts of separate railway control.

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*A History of Inland Transport and Communication in England.*

By EDWIN A. PRATT. (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1912. Pp. x, 532. \$2.00.)

Mr. Pratt's book is the introductory volume of an English series on "National Industries," under the general editorship of Mr. Henry Higgs. American students of the industrial economy will look forward with pleasurable anticipation to the various volumes that are to appear under Mr. Higgs' expert guidance, especially as the announcements thus far made promise contributions from the younger English economists, whose names are as yet not so familiar here as among our colleagues in England.

In his excursion into history, a somewhat novel field for Mr. Pratt, he has aimed to present to his readers a connected account of the development of internal communication in England from the primitive facilities of the early tin-trading Briton to the motor-omnibuses, railless trams and aeroplanes of the *fin-de-siècle* traveler. A noteworthy proportion of the volume, nearly a fourth, is devoted to roads; between two fifths and a half to railways; and the remainder to rivers, canals, motor conveyance, etc. A list of authorities, extending over more than seven pages, is appended. The latter part of the title of the book would lead one to infer that communication by post, telegraph, and telephone was included, but this is not so.

Mr. Pratt is an old hand at writing for the public, and the present volume lacks neither in lucidity nor in interest. Quotations might, with advantage, have been used more sparingly, but, at any rate, they are apropos; altogether the book is well designed to familiarize the general reader, in agreeable fashion, with the progress of transportation facilities in England. Footnotes are practically dispensed with, and even references are inserted parenthetically in the body of the text—the latter surely a questionable device. The bibliography of authorities consulted is an interesting one, though one wonders why the parliamentary papers

that the author used in the preparation of his history are not recorded more completely; or why certain omissions occur—for example, Dr. Lardner's classic treatise of 1849-50, which, by the way, is not even mentioned in the text; or why some entries are made under "T" because their titles commence with the definite article. Where the sources are so miscellaneous, a classified and annotated list is a moral obligation; carelessly prepared lists are literary *lèse-majesté*.

Mr. Pratt deals with a branch of economic history, of which our knowledge is curiously uneven. Much hard digging must be the lot of anyone who aims at a thoroughly satisfactory treatment. This research Mr. Pratt has not done to any extensive degree, probably conceiving that, for the purpose he had in view, it was unnecessary. But, as a consequence, the book suffers from the point of view of the student; and even to the general reader, its value is impaired. There is a distinct lack of proportion. The part played by canal navigation is inadequately brought out; the material progress of railway communication during the half century following 1840-1850 is scarcely noted; except in the earlier chapters, the author fails to bring into sufficient relief the relation between the development of inland transportation and the economic advance of the country; the results of the commission regulation of the acts of 1873 and 1888 receive little consideration, and so on. On the other hand, Mr. Pratt gives disproportionate attention to the highways, though, on the whole, this is the most successful part of the book. For a history limited to five hundred pages, his description of the present status of the railway industry is full to the point of distention. In numerous places, the narrative could have been compressed with advantage, and the space thus made available used for expansion elsewhere.

But though in this work Mr. Pratt has not done full justice to his own great abilities, the fact must not be overlooked that he has brought together within the compass of his volume much scattered material, and thereby has made intelligible to all, for the first time, the fascinating story of the development of England's transportation system. And this is no small achievement.

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#### NEW BOOKS

BIERMER, M. *Die hessische Eisenbahnfrage nach dem Landtagsschlusse.* (Giessen: E. Roth. 1912. 1.50 m.)